



# How to have hope





بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, The Most Gracious, The Most Merciful





Assalamu'alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuhu,

We pray that this message reaches you  
in good health and imaan.

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May Allah make our paths toward seeking  
beneficial knowledge easy and kindle our hearts  
with sincerity and gratefulness  
towards Him.

Jazakumullahu Khayran



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## Glossary



جل جلاله | Jalla Jalāluhu  
**Allah the Most Exalted**



صلى الله عليه وسلم | Sallāllāhu Alayhi Wa Sallam  
**Peace and blessings of Allah be upon him**



رضي الله عنه | RadiAllahu `anhu  
**May Allah be pleased with him**



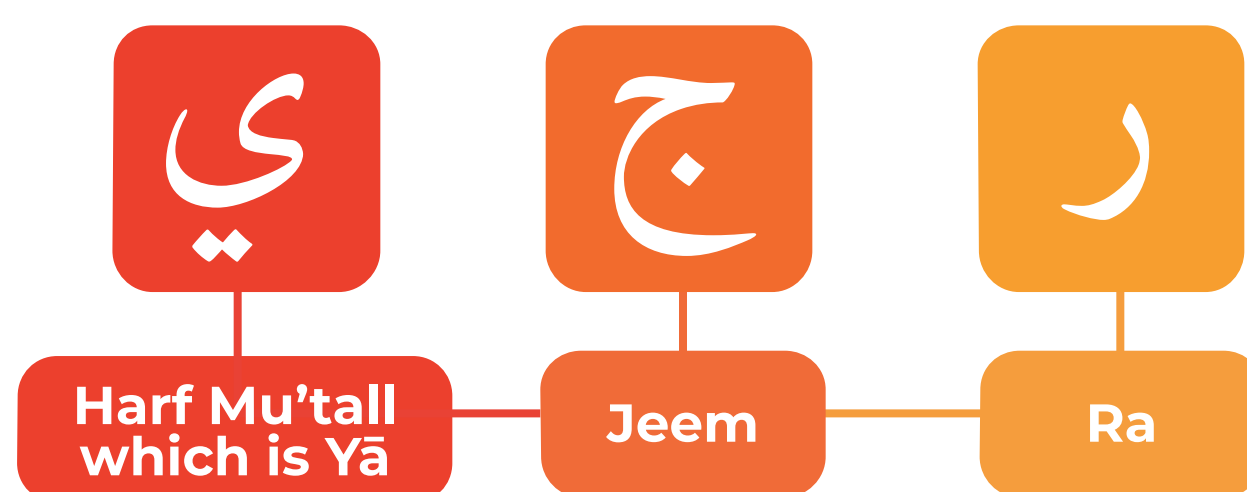
رحمه الله | Rahimahullah  
**May Allah have mercy upon him**

# The Meaning of Rajā

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*Chapter One*

In the Arabic language, Rajā comes from the three letter word



It originates from the word Rajiya. All of those mean Aman, which is hope in the Arabic language.

The Arabs say:

رَجَوْتُ الْأَمْرَ أَرْجُوهُ رَجَاءً

“Hoped for a matter, I hope, hoping”

It then got used for other meaning for example: **fear**.

1 Allāh ﷻ says:

﴿مَا لَكُمْ لَا تَرْجُونَ لِلَّهِ وَقَارًا﴾

“What is the matter with you that you are not in awe of the Majesty of Allah.”

Ṣurah Nūh: 13

In this verse, it means: is not one in fear of the power and ability of Allāh.

Also, it can mean the side of anything.

2 Also, a people who are scared, as Allāh ﷻ says:

﴿وَالْمَلَكُ عَلَى أَرْجَائِهَا وَيَحْمِلُ عَرْشَ رَبِّكَ فَوْقَهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ ثَمَانِيَةٌ﴾

“with the angels on its sides. On that Day eight ‘mighty angels’ will bear the Throne of your Lord above them.”

Ṣurah Al-Hāqqah: 17

In this verse, it means side.

Also, it can mean to delay a matter. For example, the Arabs say:

أَرْجَأْتُ الشَّيْءَ

“I delayed a matter”

3 Allāh ﷻ said:

﴿تُرْجِي مَنْ تَشَاءُ مِنْهُنَّ وَتُؤْوِي إِلَيْكَ مَنْ تَشَاءُ﴾

“It is up to you ‘O Prophet’ to delay or receive whoever you please of your wives.”

Ṣurah Al-Ahzāb: 51

This is why the Murji’ah are called ‘Murji’ah’ because they delayed and put back actions from Īmān.

Technically, the word Rajā is to connect one’s heart to something or someone that one loves. The reason that one is doing this is because of something they are hoping to attain from it.

There are many other meanings. Ibn Al-Qayyim رحمته الله says:

"الرجاء: هو امتداد القلب وميله إلى المحبوب، منقطعاً عما يقطعه عنه"

**“al-Rajā: Is when a person’s heart extends and leans towards something they love and it is disconnected from anything other than that.”**

Al-Rūh p.246

Also, other great scholars have given different meanings.

Overall, Rajā means to connect one’s heart to Allāh ﷻ, finding glad tidings in Allāh’s existence and His virtue. Also, it is to find ease, comfort and happiness in seeing His blessings, generosity and kindness.

The opposite of Rajā is the word Ya’s which means to give up and is the absence of hope. This is to give up in the mercy of Allāh ﷻ and it is a sin.

**4** Ya’qūb said to his children:

﴿وَلَا تَيْأَسُوا مِنْ رَوْحِ اللَّهِ إِنَّهُ لَا يَيْأَسُ مِنْ رَوْحِ اللَّهِ إِلَّا الْقَوْمُ الْكَافِرُونَ﴾

**“and despair not of relief from Allah. Indeed, no one despairs of relief from Allah except the disbelieving people.”**

Ṣurah Yūsuf: 87



# The Difference Between Al-Rajā and Al-Tamannī

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*Chapter Two*

It is extremely important to differentiate between these two words.

**Al-Tamannī** is to have hope with laziness. One does not strive and exert to come with the means. In English it is called: wishful thinking. However, al-Rajā is to have hope whilst exerting effort and hard work.

‘Abd al-Ra’ūf al-Munāwī رَحِمَهُ اللهُ - differentiates between them - and said:

"التمني مذموم، والرجاء محمود؛ لأن التمني يفضي بصاحبه إلى الكسل،  
بخلاف الرجاء فإنه تعليق القلب بمحسوب يحصل حالاً."

**“Al-Tamannī is blameworthy whilst al-Rajā is praiseworthy.  
This is because al-Tamannī leads the person to laziness in contrast to  
al-Rajā for this is to connect one’s heart to its beloved (Allāh)  
whilst not giving up (i.e. exerting efforts)”**

Fayd al-Qadīr 5/67

Allāh ﷻ mentions that the Rajā of the believers is always connected to actions.

**1** Allāh ﷻ said:

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا وَجَاهَدُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أُولَٰئِكَ يَرْجُونَ  
رَحْمَتَ اللَّهِ ۚ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ﴾

**“Surely those who have believed, emigrated, and struggled in the Way of Allah  
—they can hope for Allah’s mercy. And Allah is All-Forgiving, Most Merciful.”**

Ṣurah Al-Baqarah: 218

They believed, migrated and fought in the path of Allāh. After coming with these actions they hoped in the mercy of Allāh.

Allāh did not speak regarding al-Tamannī in a good light.

**2** Allāh ﷻ said:

﴿لَيْسَ بِأَمَانِيكُمْ وَلَا أَمَانِي أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ ۚ مَنْ يَعْمَلْ  
سُوءًا يُجْزَ بِهِ وَلَا يَجِدْ لَهُ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَلِيًّا وَلَا نَصِيرًا﴾

**“It [i.e., Paradise] is not [obtained] by your wishful thinking nor by that  
of the People of the Scripture. Whoever does a wrong will be recompensed  
for it, and he will not find besides Allah a protector or a helper.”**

Ṣurah An-Nisā: 123

For example, it is the people of the scripture who came with wishful thinking.

**3** They said:

﴿وَقَالُوا لَنْ يَدْخُلَ الْجَنَّةَ إِلَّا مَنْ كَانَ هُودًا أَوْ نَصَارَىٰ ۚ  
تِلْكَ أَمَانِيُّهُمْ ۚ قُلْ هَاتُوا بُرْهَانَكُمْ إِن كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ﴾

**“The Jews and Christians each claim that none will enter Paradise  
except those of their own faith. These are their desires. Reply, ‘O Prophet’:  
Show ‘me’ your proof if what you say is true.”**

Ṣurah Al-Baqarah: 111

For example, it is the people of the scripture who came with wishful thinking.

4 Hasan al-Basrī رحمته الله said:

"إِن الْإِيمَانَ لَيْسَ بِالتَّحَلِّي وَلَا بِالتَّمَنِّي، إِنَّمَا الْإِيمَانُ مَا وَقَرَ فِي الْقَلْبِ وَصَدَقَهُ الْعَمَلُ"

**“Īmān is not something that one dresses themselves with and it is not wishful thinking. Īmān is only that which settles in the heart and it attested to through their actions.”**

Musannaf Ibn Abī Shaybah 30351, Shu’ab al-Īmān by al-Bayhaqī 66 and authenticated by Ibn al-Qayyim

"إِنْ قَوْمًا أَلْهَتَهُمُ الْأَمَانِي حَتَّى خَرَجُوا مِنَ الدُّنْيَا وَمَا لَهُمْ حَسَنَةٌ،

وَيَقُولُ أَحَدُهُمْ: إِنِّي أَحْسَنُ الظَّنِّ بِرَبِّي. وَكَذَبَ، لَوْ أَحْسَنَ الظَّنُّ لِأَحْسَنِ الْعَمَلِ"

**“A group of people have been deceived by wishful thinking. They left this world and had no righteous deeds. One of them says: I have good thoughts about my Lord. He lied, for if he had good thoughts he would have good actions.”**

Fayd al-Qadīr 5/67

From this we learn that al-Tamannī is not praiseworthy, whereas al-Rajā is a praiseworthy affair as they work hard and exert efforts.

Allāh ﷻ spoke against the people with wishful thinking from the early nations.

5 Allāh ﷻ said:

﴿فَخَلَفَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ خَلْفٌ وَرِثُوا الْكِتَابَ يَأْخُذُونَ عَرَضَ هَذَا الْأَدْنَىٰ وَيَقُولُونَ سَيُغْفَرُ لَنَا﴾

**“Then they were succeeded by other generations who inherited the Scripture. They indulged in unlawful gains, claiming: We will be forgiven ‘after all’.”**

Ṣurah Al-A’rāf: 169

6 It was said by the one with false hope:

﴿وَمَا أَظُنُّ السَّاعَةَ قَائِمَةً وَلَئِنْ رُودْتُ إِلَىٰ رَبِّي لَأَجِدَنَّ خَيْرًا مِّنْهَا مُنْقَلَبًا﴾

**“And I do not think the Hour will occur. And even if I should be brought back to my Lord, I will surely find better than this as a return.”**

Ṣurah Al-Kahf: 36

This is what al-Tamannī – only wishful thinking is.



# Factors to Aid Establishment of Al-Rajā

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*Chapter Three*

1

### Remembering the previous blessings of Allāh upon the slave

The slave should remember that Allāh has previously blessed them with many blessings. Allāh created them, gifted them the ability to hear and see, and gave them a place to live. He blessed them with the ability to ponder and contemplate. These blessings can never be repaid. Hence, when one is about to lose hope in Allāh then they should remember that the one who blessed them before will also bless them in the present and in the future.

2

### Remembering the promise of Allāh and His great rewards and generosity

When one reflects upon this they will realise that the treasures of Allāh do not have an end. Allāh rewarded the slave with many things before they were even deserving of it, even then, one will never be able to repay this. This places in the heart of the slave hope in Allāh.

3

### Remembering the current blessing of Allāh

Allāh has blessed us and continues to bless us in the current time with provision, children, wife etc. Allāh has provided us with these blessings, whilst there are thousands of people who are starving, only wanting something to eat. There are others who are blind and have different forms of illnesses. Some people have lost members of their family. Therefore, one should be thankful to Allāh and always look at those who are below them. Instead of looking at what is missing we should try and look at what we have. This will help us have hope in Allāh.

4

### Remembering the vast mercy of Allāh

Allāh is the Most Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy. Allāh is generous and kind to His slaves. When one remembers the mercy of Allāh and how He is more merciful than a mother to her child, this will assist one in having hope in Allāh.

The correct hope of a slave has a sign.

1

"سئل أحمد بن عاصم -رحمه الله- : ما علامة الرجاء في العبد؟ قال: أن يكون إذا أحاط به الإحسان ألهم الشكر راجياً لتمام النعمة من الله تعالى عليه في الدنيا وتمام عفوه عنه في الآخرة"

**“Ahmad Ibn ‘Āsim was asked: What is the sign that a slave has hope? He said: It is that if he is covered with good he runs to gratitude because he is hoping that Allāh completes his blessings for him in the world and he also hopes that Allāh will forgive him for it [any shortcomings] on the day of judgement.”**

Mukhtasar Tārīkh Dimashq 357

This demonstrates that we should focus on the many blessings that we have been given from Allāh.

# The Fruits of Rajā

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*Chapter Four*



## 1 Entrance into acts of obedience

Ibn al-Qayyim رحمته الله said:

1 "ومنهم المنيب إليه بالدخول في أنواع العبادات والقربات، فهو ساع فيها بجهد، وقد حبب إليه فعل الطاعات وأنواع القربات، وهذه الإنابة مصدرها الرجاء، ومطالعة الوعد والثواب، ومحبة الكرامة من الله"

“From them are those who turn back to Allāh ﷻ by entering into types of acts of worship and closeness and is exerting all their efforts in it. It has been made beloved to them acts of obedience and different [acts] of closeness, this returning originates from hope. It is by looking at the promises and the rewards Allāh. Also, the love and generosity of Allāh.”

Tarīq al-Hijratayn 272

The person who comes with hope is able to enter into many acts of worship as this is a person who is consistently and continuously returning back to Allāh.

## 2 Enjoying acts of obedience

If one has hope then they enjoy acts of obedience.

Ibn al-Qayyim رحمته الله said:

1 "الرجاء حادٍ يحدو بالراجي في سيره إلى الله، ويطيّب له المسير، ويحثه عليه، ويبعثه على ملازمته، فلولا الرجاء لما سار أحد؛ فإنّ الخوف وحده لا يحرك العبد، وإنما يحركه الحب، ويزعجه الخوف، ويحدوه الرجاء"

“Al-Rajā paves a path towards Allāh. Tt makes the path comfortable, it urges one upon it and allows one to be consistent upon it. If it was not for al-Rajā then no-one would be able to travel upon that path. Verily, fear by itself does not move a slave. Rather, it is only moved by love, held back through fear and pushed forward through hope.”

Madārij al-Sālikīn 2/50

## 3 Making apparent one’s servitude towards Allāh

By showing hope, one is demonstrating that they are the slave of Allāh. The slave is showing that they are in need of Allāh.

Ibn al-Qayyim رحمته الله said:

1 "طمع العبد في ربه ورجاؤه له يوجب عبوديته له، وإعراض قلبه عن الطلب من الله والرجاء له يوجب انصراف قلبه عن العبودية لله"

“Having hope in Allāh necessitates servitude towards Allāh. If the heart turns away from requesting from Allāh and hoping in Him, then this necessitates the heart turning away from the servitude of Allāh.”

Al-Fatāwā al-Kubrā 5/182

## 4 Establishment of supplication

Ibn al-Qayyim رحمته الله said:

- 1
- "الدعاء مبني على الرجاء؛ فإن الداعي ما لم يطمع في سؤاله ومطلوبه لم تتحرك نفسه لطلبه؛ إذ طلب ما لا طمع فيه ممتنع"
- "Supplication is built upon al-Rajā; for if the one supplicating does not have hope in their request then they would not move forward to supplication. Therefore, if a person does not have hope they are prevented [from supplicating]."
- Badā'i al-Fawā'id 3/523

## 5 Being saved from the anger of Allāh

It has been narrated on the authority of Abū Hurayrah رضي الله عنه that Allāh's Messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم said:

- 1
- "إِنَّهُ مَنْ لَمْ يَسْأَلِ اللَّهَ يَغْضَبْ عَلَيْهِ"
- "Verily, whoever does not ask Allāh, then Allāh is angry upon them."
- Jāmi' al-Tirmidhī 3373 and authenticated by al-Albānī

## 6 Knowing the names and attributes of Allāh

This is because the one who has hope is relying upon names from the names of Allāh such as: the Most generous and is seeking generosity, the Most merciful and is seeking mercy, and the Most forgiving and is seeking forgiveness.

## 7 Attaining one's goals

If one connects their heart to Allāh ﷻ then He will grant one what they are looking for.

Ibn al-Qayyim رحمته الله said:

- 1
- "وكلما كان العبد حسن الظن بالله، حسن الرجاء له، صادق التوكل عليه: فإن الله لا يخيب أمله فيه ألبتة، فإنه سبحانه لا يخيب أمل آمل، ولا يضيع عمل عليه"
- "The more that the slave thinks good of their Lord, their hope becomes better and their reliance becomes truthful. Allāh will never forsake them in that which they thought of Him. For verily, He does not forsake the hope of the one who is hoping and He does not forsake the action of the one who really does it for His sake."
- Madārij al-Sālikīn 1/471

## 8 Attaining the love of Allāh

Verily, Allāh ﷻ will love the slave for showing this quality of servitude because Allāh loves every act of worship.

# The Believer Is Between Al-Khawf and Al-Rajā

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*Chapter Five*



Badr al-Dīn al-‘Aynī رحمته الله said:

- 1 "إن المكلف لو تحقق ما عند الله من الرحمة لما قطع رجاءه أصلاً، ولو تحقق ما عنده من العذاب لما ترك الخوف أصلاً، فينبغي أن يكون بين الخوف والرجاء، فلا يكون مفرطاً في الرجاء بحيث يصير من المرجئة القائلين بأنه لا يضر مع الإيمان شيء، ولا في الخوف بحيث يكون من الخوارج والمعتزلة القائلين بتخليد صاحب الكبيرة إذا مات من غير توبة في النار، بل يكون وسطاً بينهما كما قال تعالى: وَيَرْجُونَ رَحْمَتَهُ وَيَخَافُونَ عَذَابَهُ"
 

“The one who is burdened, if they were to truly understand the mercy of Allāh they would never leave off hope. If the person was to truly know the punishment of Allāh, they would not leave off fear. Therefore, it is necessary to be between fear and hope. They should not be extreme in hope until they become from the Murji’ah who say that nothing harms Īmān. Neither should they be extreme in fear until they become from the Khawārij and Mu’tazilah who say that the one who commits a major sin will remain in the fire if they die without repentance. Rather, one should be balanced as Allāh ﷻ said: hoping for His mercy, and fearing His punishment.”

‘Umdah al-Qārī 23/66-67

Every true believer in Allāh should resolve their life around hope and fear. Hoping in Allāh’s mercy and fearing Allāh’s punishment.

Allāh combined between these two in many verses.

Allāh ﷻ said:

- 2 ﴿إِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَسَرِيعُ الْعِقَابِ ۖ وَإِنَّهُ لَغَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ﴾
 

“Indeed, your Lord is swift in punishment, but He is certainly All-Forgiving, Most Merciful.”

Surah Al-A’rāf: 167
- 3 ﴿إِنَّ الْأَبْرَارَ لَفِي نَعِيمٍ - وَإِنَّ الْفُجَّارَ لَفِي جَحِيمٍ﴾
 

“Indeed, the virtuous will be in bliss, and the wicked will be in Hell.”

Surah Al-Infītār: 13-14
- 4 ﴿فَأَمَّا مَنْ ثَقُلَتْ مَوَازِينُهُ - فَهُوَ فِي عِيشَةٍ رَّاضِيَةٍ - وَأَمَّا مَنْ خَفَّتْ مَوَازِينُهُ - فَأُمُّهُ هَاوِيَةٌ﴾
 

“So as for those whose scale is heavy ‘with good deeds’, they will be in a life of bliss. And as for those whose scale is light, their home will be the abyss.”

Surah Al-Qāri’ah: 6-9

Fear necessitates hope similarly in the way hope necessitates fear to the believer.

Allāh ﷻ said:

- 5 ﴿مَا لَكُمْ لَا تَرْجُونَ لِلَّهِ وَقَارًا﴾
 

“What is the matter with you that you are not in awe of the Majesty of Allah.”

Surah Nūh: 13

It has been said by many of the scholars of Tafsīr that it means: why do you not fear the greatness of Allāh.

Ibn Taymiyyah رحمته الله said:

6 "والخشية أبداً متضمنة للرجاء، ولولا ذلك لكانت قنوطاً، كما أن الرجاء يستلزم الخوف، ولولا ذلك لكان أمناً، فأهل الخوف لله والرجاء له هم أهل العلم الذين مدحهم الله"

**“Al-Khashya is always reliant upon hope, if it was not for this then it would have been to give up. Similarly, al-Rajā necessitates fear, for if it wasn’t for this it would have been wishful thinking. Verily, the people of fear and hope in Allāh are the people of knowledge; those whom Allāh has praised.”**

Majmū’ al-Fatāwā 7/21

# Times When Al-Rajā Should Be Higher Than Al-Khawf

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*Chapter Six*



1 Death

At the time of death a person should give precedence to hope in comparison to fear.

It has been narrated on the authority of Abū Hurayrah رضي الله عنه that the Prophet ﷺ said:

- 1
- "قَالَ اللَّهُ أَنَا عِنْدَ ظَنِّ عَبْدِي بِي"  
"Allāh said: I am as My slave thinks of Me."  
Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī 7505 and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim 2675

Also, on the authority of Wāthilah Ibn al-Asqa’ رضي الله عنه that he heard Allāh’s Messenger ﷺ say:

- 2
- "قال الله: أنا عند ظن عبدي بي؛ فليظن بي ما شاء"  
"Allāh said: I am as My slave thinks of Me; so think of Me whatever you will."  
Musnad Ahmad 16059 and authenticated by al-Hākim and agreed by al-Dhahabī

Al-Kirmānī said:

- 3
- "فيه إشارة إلى ترجيح جانب الرجاء على جانب الخوف"  
"This indicates to give precedence to hope upon fear"  
‘Umdah al-Qārī 25/101

Some of the scholars understood this to be at the time of death with the narration of Jābir رضي الله عنه where he narrated that he heard Allāh’s Messenger say three days before his death:

- 4
- "لَا يَمُوتَنَّ أَحَدُكُمْ إِلَّا وَهُوَ يُحْسِنُ بِاللَّهِ الظَّنَّ"  
"One of you do not [truly] believe except the one who has good thoughts about Allāh"  
Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim 2877

Imām al-Nawawī رحمته الله said:

- 5
- "من المستحب تنبيه المحتضر على إحسان ظنه بالله تعالى، وذكر حسن أعماله عنده؛ ليحسن ظنه بالله تعالى ويموت عليه، وهذا الأدب مستحب بالاتفاق"  
"It is recommended to alert the one who is passing away to have good thoughts of Allāh and to mention their good deeds; so they have good thoughts of Allāh and die upon this. This etiquette is recommended by consensus"  
Sharh Muslim 2/138

It was said to Imām al-Shāfi’ī at the time of his death: how are you this morning O’ Abā ‘Abdallāh. He replied:

6

"أصبحت من الدنيا راحلاً، ولإخواني مفارقاً، ولكأس المنية شارباً، ولسوء فعلي ملاقياً، وعلى الله واردا فلا أدري رُوحِي إلى جنةٍ تصير فأهنيها، أو إلى نارٍ تصير فأعزيها، ثم بكى وأنشأ يقول:

وَلَمَّا قَسَا قَلْبِي وَضَاقَتْ مَذَاهِبِي      جَعَلْتُ الرَّجَا مِنِّي لِعَفْوِكَ سُلَّمًا

تَعَاظَمَنِي ذَنْبِي فَلَمَّا قَرَنْتُهُ      بِعَفْوِكَ رَبِّي كَانَ عَفْوُكَ أَعْظَمًا

“I have awoken as a person who has; departed from this world, separated from his companions, tasted the bitterness of death, will meet my evil actions, and going towards Allāh. I do not know whether my soul will go to paradise so I give it glad tidings or whether it is going to the fire so I console it. Then he cried and recited the following lines of poetry:

When my heart became tainted and things became tight upon me  
I place my hope in You and use Your forgiveness as a ladder  
My sins became big to me but when I compared it  
to Your forgiveness, then Your forgiveness is greater

Tārīkh Dimashq 50/331

Imām al-Nawawī رحمته الله said:

7

"إذا دنت أمارات الموت غلب جانب الرجاء أو مَحَضَّهُ؛ لأن مقصود الخوف: الانكفاف عن المعاصي والقبائح، والحرص على الإكثار من الطاعات والأعمال، وقد تعذر ذلك أو معظمه في هذا الحال، فاستحب إحسان الظن المتضمن للافتقار إلى الله تعالى والإذعان له"

“If the signs of death come then hope should overcome fear, because the intent of fear is to leave off sins and evil acts and to strive towards increasing in righteous actions and deeds. This has all or a lot of even has been stopped at this time. Therefore, it is recommended to have good thoughts which consists of humbling oneself towards their Lord and hoping in Him.”

Sharh Muslim 17/210

2 When despairing in the mercy of Allāh due to sins

If one feels as if they have sinned a lot and have committed many crimes causing them to being scared and worried; then they should have hope in Allāh. Have hope that Allāh will forgive. If one is in this state then they should be reminded about Jannah and the hope of forgiveness for example, how Allāh forgive a man who killed ninety-nine people and narrations like these.



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